

## Ali, Fatuma and family

For the past 6 years, Ali (age 32) and Fatuma (age 28) have been raising their 4 children (ages 7 – 2) in a 3-bedroom apartment. “It’s just not working for our family of 6. There’s no space to move around and to be good neighbors, we try to keep the kids’ noise levels at a minimum but it can be difficult,” says Fatuma. “We spend a lot of time over at their grandparents home because of their backyard. Unfortunately, when living in an apartment, a backyard to play in is just not something we can give our children.”

After learning about Habitat’s program through Ali’s brother, Ali and Fatuma became motivated to become homeowners. “Owning a home is something we’ve both always strived for,” says Ali. “Fatuma and I are from the same small town in Somalia and life there is something else. When I was young, my family fled Somalia due to the war and we lived in a refugee camp in Kenya for the next 8 years. It’s a very tough life when you live in a camp.”

Although Ali and Fatuma didn’t know each other prior to the U.S., they were both accepted to move to the United States in 2004 after multiple times applying - Ali was 15 at the time and Fatuma was 12. Several years later in 2010, the couple met for the first time at a friend’s wedding and married a year later!

Ali and Fatuma were accepted into Habitat’s homeownership program in Spring of 2020 on their fifth attempt. The couple needed to improve their credit and bring in a higher income and they’ve worked hard these last few years to become a 2-income household while raising their 4 children. Ali currently works at Faurecia as a Forklift Operator and Fatuma has begun working at PSC Industries in Shipping & Receiving.

“This means everything to our family and it’s why we’ve never lost sight of our dreams,” says Ali. “This home means brighter futures for our children. Fatuma and I both come from the toughest of situations growing up and we’re grateful to give our children what we never had. This home will hold so many memories for years to come.”

To the sponsors and volunteers who will help build this family’s home this June, Ali and Fatuma shared, “Thank you for your hard work and dedication. But mostly, thank you for the positive impact this experience will bring to our children. The first thing we plan to do is play with our children in our new yard.”

